

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2860

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LIMDIS

JOINT STATE/AID ACTION

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP EAID BC LT WZ

SUBJECT: AID STAFFING IN BLS COUNTRIES

1. REPORTS REACHING HERE INDICATE AID/W INTENTION TO ASSIGN COUNTRY MISSION DIRECTORS AT FSO-1 LEVEL TO BLS COUNTRIES AT TIME OF NEW FISCAL YEAR. SUCH A MOVE WOULD BE INADVISABLE ON A NUMBER OF COUNTS.

2. REASONS FOR DISCOURAGING ASSIGNMENTS AT R-1 LEVEL CAN BE SUMMARIZED UNDER TWO PRINCIPAL HEADINGS: (A) INEFFICIENCY IN TREATING THE THREE COUNTRIES ALIKE WHEN PROGRAMS, CIRCUMSTANCES, PROBLEMS AND PERSONALITIES ARE VERY DIFFERENT; (B) RISK OF SENDING WRONG SIGNALS TO HOST COUNTRIES AS A RESULT OF ENHANCED US VISIBILITY AND CORRESPONDING EXPECTATIONS.

3. THERE HAS BEEN A STEADY BUILDUP OF AID

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STAFF OVER THE PAST YEAR CONSISTENT WITH EXPANDED PROGRAM LEVELS AND ACTIVITIES. WHILE ALL THE NEW POSITION HAVE NOT YET BEEN FILLED, THE BASIC ORGANIZATION IS NOW ESTABLISHED. THE ASSIGNMENT OF AID OFFICIALS OF HIGHEST RANK TO ALL THREE BLS COUNTRIES WOULD SEEM TO (A) OVER-LOOK THE FACT THE BUILDUP HAS OCCURRED AND

THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR IT; (B) DISREGARD THE RELATIVELY SMALL SIZE OF THE COUNTRIES (IN THE CASE OF LESOTHO AND SWAZILAND, SMALLER THAN THE STATE OF MARLAND), THE LIMITED NUMBERS OF PEOPLE IN ALL THREE (TOTALING 2.4 MILLION), THE GENERAL LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE, TRAINED PERSONNEL, STATISTICAL DATA, ETC., THAT INHIBIT DEVELOPMENT IN THIS AREA; (C) SUCH ASSIGNMENTS WOULD ALSO APPEAR TO BYPASS THE STARTING POINT FOR DETERMINING SIZE OF STAFF, NAMELY THAT STAFF COMPLEMENT "MUST BE RELATED TO A STRINGENT APPRAISAL OF POLICY AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS" (PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER OF OCTOBER 25, 1977). THE LOGICAL EXTENSION OF THIS GUIDELINE IS TO ASSURE THAT LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION IS SIMILARLY APPROPRIATE. THIS MEANS HAVING ASSURED, SUSTAINABLE (REPEAT SUSTAINABLE) PROGRAM POSSIBILITIES WHILE TAKING FULLY INTO ACCOUNT (A) THE POLITICAL TENSIONS AND TURMOIL IN THE REGION; (B) THE IMPACT OF THIS TURBULENCE ON HOST COUNTRY PRIORITIES; AND (C) THE ACTIVITIES OF OTHER DONORS. IN THIS CONNECTION, IT IS WORTH REPEATING THAT WE HAVE REACHED PRESENT PROGRAMMING LEVELS (WITH REDSO ASSISTANCE) DRAWING ON EXISTING STAFF. THIS IS RELEVANT IN CONSIDERING ANY PROPOSAL FOR SIGNIFICANT CHANGE. EQUALLY DESERVING OF EMPHASIS IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE FACT THAT RANK RAISES EXPECTATIONS AS WELL AS VISIBILITY; GIVEN THE POLITICAL AND LOGISTICAL RESTRAINTS IN ALL THREE COUNTRIES, BOTH ARE TO BE AVOIDED.

4. A MAJOR ASPECT OF CONCERN FOR EFFICIENCY IS THAT REPLACEMENT OF CURRENT TOP OFFICIALS, WHO HAVE ROUGHLY ONE YEAR'S EXPERIENCE ON THE JOB, WOULD RESULT IN A LOSS THAT COULD NOT LIKELY BE RECOVERED IN LESS THAN SIX MONTHS. FINALLY, ASSIGNMENT OF R-1 LEVEL OFFICIALS WOULD MEAN THAT AID OFFICERS WOULD FAR OUTRANK THE RESIDENT CHARGES IN SWAZILAND AND LESOTHO AND THE DCM (PART-TIME CHARGE) I BOTSWANA. WE WOULD THEREBY RISK INTRODUCING PROBLEMS IN RELATIONSHIPS WHERE NONE NOW EXISTS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: (A) TAILOR PERSONNEL LEVELS AND NUMBERS TO FIT OVERALL US POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IN THE BLS COUNTRIES BY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE POLITICAL/LOGISTICAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL/GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITATIONS OF EACH;

(B) SPECIFIC STAFF NEEDS OF BLS COUNTRIES
BE DETERMINED ON BASIS OF SUSTAINABLE LEVEL OF
PROGRAMMING;
(C) MISSION DIRECTOR POSITIONS BE STAFFED
KEEPING IN MIND ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE AND
IN NO CASE, SHOULD LEVEL EXCEED R-2;
(D) FOR MORAL AND EFFICIENT PERFORMANCE OF
ALL CONCERNED THESE SENSITIVE ISSUES BE SUBJECT
OF CONSULTATION BY TELEGRAM OR TELEPHONE.
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